

NINE MONTHS TO IMPLEMENT CM/ECF – HENCE THE NAME . . .

THE BACK NINE

YOUR **CM/ECF** RESOURCE FOR
THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA



Message from the CM/ECF Project Team

Here in the Northern District we've spent several months promoting CM/ECF and touting the benefits of this *new* technology. However, did you know that out of 193 District and Bankruptcy courts, 123 *already* use CM/ECF or will be implementing it by next spring? That must mean there are a few experts out

there; so, we scoured some of the district and bankruptcy courts' websites for opinions about CM/ECF from the most qualified source—practitioners who use the system. It turns out that there were a few attorneys who had something to say about CM/ECF – imagine that!

How Will Your Day Change with CM/ECF?

This past summer, attorneys, paralegals and legal assistants from different cities in Nebraska participated in a focus group discussion that was held to determine the impact of CM/ECF on the way that they do their jobs. Listed below are some of the participants' responses to various questions.

How has your job changed with CM/ECF?

- Moved office to home
- Documents are more accurate because not fighting the deadline
- Happier office
- Don't worry about mail delays
- Only printing documents as needed

What are the advantages and disadvantages of CM/ECF?

- Advantage: ability to create a document and send it with no need for support
- Disadvantage: sharing scanners in office
- Advantage: dramatic postage savings
- Disadvantage: extending workday – staff is staying longer
- Advantage: office files are more complete – not worried any longer about who has file-stamped copy

How has your time shifted since CM/ECF?

- No time spent on travel
- Spending more time on legal research – asking paralegals to research more cases because documents are available online
- Time spent on clerical activities has shifted to case management activities
- Quality of life has increased – can leave work to spend time with family
- Eliminated the problem associated with non-billable clerical work

Quotes from the Experts

An attorney who e-files wrote as a guest columnist for "Electronic Filing News," the District of Nebraska's CM/ECF newsletter, "My impression is that the [CM/ECF] system works, and it works well. A document prepared in any word processing format can be filed using the required PDF format. The Federal District Court electronic filing system is a look at the future. In the final analysis, the future is now."

When asked if CM/ECF is a good thing, a bankruptcy attorney in the Northern District of Iowa said, "Attorneys are here to serve their clients, and we can provide better service to our clients using CM/ECF."

Some of the first electronic filers in Tacoma, Washington offered some insight on how to make e-filing a success: "They maintain consistent communication with the court regarding ECF procedures and updates. They also ensure that their staff is well trained. Their tips? Invest in a good DSL line if it's available, and use multiple email addresses to target specific support staff."

Bob E. Filer's Top 9 List

Reasons for
Reading the
Newsletter

9. You get to read the Top Nine list.
8. You'll be "in the know" about the latest E-filing gossip.
7. It'll make time go by faster while you're waiting to tee off.
6. You get to check out Bob E. Filer's new look each month.
5. It's only one page.
4. You'll learn something new about CM/ECF . . . we promise.
3. It's free.
2. You'll know what everyone is talking about next spring.
1. It will only be available for nine months!



Bob E. Filer* says, "Don't let CM/ECF scare you!"

CM/ECF Project Team

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Visit us on the web at
www.oknd.uscourts.gov

*Bob E. Filer is the Official
2003-2004 Computer Spokes-
model for CM/ECF